

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15  
ICA-11 SAA-01 SSM-03 IO-13 /093 W  
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R 172138Z JUL 78  
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4442  
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
USINT BAGHDAD  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 16732

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1  
TAGS: PEPR, SOPN, IZ, UR  
SUBJECT: SOVIET-IRAQI RELATIONS: COMMENT IN MOSCOW

1. PRAVDA'S VETERAN MIDDLE EAST COMMENTATOR DEMCHENKO  
PUBLISHES JULY 14 ARTICLE ON THE OCCASION OF IRAQ'S  
NATIONAL DAY WHICH DEPARTS SOMEWHAT FROM BLAND FORMAT  
USUALLY CHARACTERIZING SUCH ANNIVERSARY PIECES.  
DEMCHENKO BRIEFLY TRACES POLITICAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOP-  
MENTS IN IRAQ SINCE 1958 (CLASS CONFLICTS, "AGONIZINGLY"  
SOLVED NATIONAL QUESTION, ETC.) AND COMMENTS ON  
CURRENT SITUATION IN A WAY WHICH MAKES CLEAR TO  
SOVIET READER THAT DOMESTIC SITUATION CONTINUES  
UNSETTLED, ESPECIALLY FOR COMMUNISTS. AMONG DEMCHENKO'S  
COMMENTS:

-- IRAQI "PATRIOTS" HAVE ENJOYED VICTORIES BUT ALSO  
SUFFERED THE "BITTERNESS OF RETREATS. . .CONSIDERABLE  
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BLOOD HAS BEEN SHED." ONE HAS TO CONCLUDE THAT  
IRAQ'S DEVELOPMENT HAS BEEN MOST SUCCESSFUL IN THOSE  
PERIODS WHEN ITS NATIONAL-PATRIOTIC FORCES HAVE  
OPERATED IN SOLIDARITY.  
-- THE ACTIVITY OF THE PROGRESSIVE NATIONAL-PATRIOTIC  
FRONT, EMBRACING THE COMMUNIST PARTY, HAS BEEN  
APPROVED BY THE WORKING CLASS AND SOCIETY AT LARGE,

WHICH SEES IN IT AN INSTRUMENT FOR ACHIEVING COOPERATION BETWEEN PROGRESSIVE FORCES AS WELL AS NATIONAL UNITY.

-- "IT WOULD BE INCORRECT TO IGNORE DIFFICULTIES WHICH HAVE ARISEN IN THE ACTIVITY OF THE FRONT. . ." THE DEVELOPING EVENTS IN THE COMPLEX MIDDLE EAST SITUATION SOMETIMES PRODUCE "UNEXPECTED AND DIFFICULT TASKS" FOR THE IRAQIS.

-- COMMUNIST PARTY PAPER "TARIK ASH-SHAAB" IS APPROVINGLY QUOTED TO EFFECT THAT WHENEVER DIFFERING VIEWS ARISE WITHIN THE FRONT, DISCUSSION ON A DEMOCRATIC BASIS, AND THE CORRECTION OF MISTAKES BY FRIENDLY CRITICISM AND SELF-CRITICISM, IS THE BEST APPROACH.

-- FRUITFULNESS OF SOVIET-IRAQI COOPERATION BASED ON THE PRINCIPLES OF NON-INTERFERENCE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF ONE ANOTHER HAS BEEN PROVEN BY TIME.  
2. A DEPUTY DIRECTOR, FOREIGN MINISTRY NEAR EAST COUNTRIES DEPARTMENT, ACKNOWLEDGED TO EMBOFFS DURING JULY 14 COURTESY CALL THAT SOVIET-IRAQI RELATIONSHIP IS DELICATE. HE AVOIDED COMMENT ON SITUATION OF IRAQI COMMUNISTS BUT OBSERVED THAT INTERESTS OF BOTH COUNTRIES, ESPECIALLY AT THIS TIME, DICTATE CONTINUED GOOD, NORMAL RELATIONS. HE SAID THERE HAD CONFIDENTIAL

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BEEN NO RECENT HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL CONTACTS BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS, JUST EXCHANGES AT THE AMBASSADORIAL LEVEL.

3. IRAQI EMBOFF COMMENTED SAME DAY TO EMBOFF THAT THE CURRENT "DIFFICULTIES" IN BILATERAL RELATIONS WILL BE OVERCOME BECAUSE SOVIET UNION AND IRAQ NEED EACH OTHER: THE SOVIETS BECAUSE THEY HAVE LOST THEIR INFLUENCE IN EGYPT, AND IRAQ BECAUSE THE U.S. IS NOT PREPARED TO SUPPORT THE PALESTINIANS AT THE EXPENSE OF THE ISRAELIS. IRAQI DIPLOMAT HAD NOT READ DEMCHENKO ARTICLE BUT WHEN SOME ELEMENTS OF IT WERE DESCRIBED HE SUGGESTED THAT PERHAPS THE PRONOUNCED EXPRESSION OF SOVIET SUPPORT FOR THE FRONT BETRAYS A CONCERN THAT THE IRAQIS MIGHT END THE COMMUNIST ROLE IN IT. MATLOCK

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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRESS COMMENTS, FOREIGN RELATIONS  
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**Draft Date:** 17 jul 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Document Number:** 1978MOSCOW16732  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** X1  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014